

# King County Healthcare Coalition Monthly Update

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The Healthcare Coalition is a network of healthcare organizations and providers that are committed to coordinating their emergency preparedness and response activities. The purpose of the Coalition is to develop and maintain a comprehensive system that assures coordination, effective communications, and optimal use of available health resources in response to emergencies and disasters.

The Healthcare Coalition is comprised of over 45 member and partner healthcare organizations and agencies. The next meeting of executives from Coalition member and partner organizations will be in the spring of 2007.

Current priorities include pandemic flu and surge planning, strengthening the governance structure through the creation of the Executive Council, recruiting more Coalition members from non-hospital providers, and developing a sustainable organization.

The overall mission of the Coalition is to reduce the burden of illness, injury, and loss of life in the event of an emergency or disaster through coordinated emergency preparedness and response.

## ***Coalition staff contacts:***

Cynthia Dold 206-205-0456 [cynthia.dold@metrokc.gov](mailto:cynthia.dold@metrokc.gov)

Lydia Ortega 206-296-5079 [lydia.ortega@metrokc.gov](mailto:lydia.ortega@metrokc.gov)

## **Please Note:**

The newest Updates to each Coalition work group are differentiated by a red asterisk\*.

## **Ambulatory Care Preparedness Work Group (ACPWG)**

**Staff contact–Aimée Welch, PHSKC at 206-205-4145**

The ACPWG is developing surge capacity plans for ambulatory care and triage services. The group is developing strategies that will expand outpatient care and telephone triage and reduce demand on hospital emergency rooms and inpatient facilities.

- The workgroup has completed its Contingency Plans for the Ambulatory Care Response to Pandemic Influenza.

[www.metrokc.gov/health/hccoalition/ambulatory](http://www.metrokc.gov/health/hccoalition/ambulatory)

- The workgroup reconvened in November to focus on developing an organizational structure for ambulatory system decisions for all hazards.
- \* Subsequent meetings will be held at the King County Medical Society Building on the 1st Wed of each month beginning. The next scheduled meeting will occur on January 3, 2007.

Recently, the Trust for America's Health released the report “ **Ready or Not 2006.**” The report rates individual states on 10 indicators of public health preparedness and presents a series of recommendations for improvement. The report is available at:

<http://healthyamericans.org/reports/bioterror06>

*There is now a web page for the Coalition that can be accessed through the Public Health website:*

[www.metrokc.gov/health/hccoalition](http://www.metrokc.gov/health/hccoalition)

## **INSIDE THIS UPDATE**

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## Critical Care Work Group

**Staff contacts –Dr. Lewis Robinson, PH at 206-205-5091 Dr. Mark Tonelli, UWMC, 206-543-3166**

[tonelli@u.washington.edu](mailto:tonelli@u.washington.edu)

The Critical Care Workgroup is comprised of Critical Care Directors from Coalition hospitals. The Workgroup will develop altered standards of care and clinical and staffing guidelines for mass critical care.

The workgroup will be engaged in 3 primary activities in the upcoming months:

- An evaluation of automatic resuscitators for definitive mechanical ventilation during emergencies.
- Operational Guidance for standardized augmentation of critical care services  
Standardized allocation of critical care interventions including recommendations for triage algorithms.

\* Unfortunately, the December Workgroup meeting was cancelled due to weather and we are in the process of rescheduling the meeting after the New Year.

## Hospital Emergency Preparedness Committee

**Staff contacts– Cynthia Dold, PH at 206-205-0456, Danica Mann -Hospital Training & Exercises, 206-947-5565**

This committee meets monthly to discuss a variety of hospital and healthcare emergency preparedness issues which includes surge capacity, evacuation planning, resource management, and training & exercises.

### Hospital Training:

- Region 6 (King County) Homeland Security is providing funding to bring out a Train the Trainer Course for Emergency Department Personnel and EMS Providers. The Basic and Advanced Disaster Life Support Train the Trainer Courses, are available through the Medical College of Georgia. They will create a cadre of instructors that are available to educate hospital and pre-hospital personnel on disaster medical management.

Event dates are January 23-26, 2007.

To register please contact: [Lydia.Ortega@metrokc.gov](mailto:Lydia.Ortega@metrokc.gov)

- The hospitals will be participating in Evacuation workshops March 27, 28 and 29, 2007. These 1-day workshops will be held in each emergency response zone. Emergency Managers, Fire partners, and Assisted Living Facilities will be invited to participate in the workshops to create awareness around hospital evacuation needs and evacuation planning. Please contact Lydia Ortega to register.

### Exercises:

- Region 6 Hospitals will be participating in the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) exercise in May. It will follow the Evacuation Workshops and we hope to incorporate some evacuation testing into the drill as well as test packaging patients and pushing them out of this area working with our NDMS partners.

### Planning:

- \* All King County hospitals have been asked to provide their pandemic flu plan for review. Many plans are currently under development throughout the region. A pandemic flu workgroup will be created to begin the development of a regional plan for hospitals in 2007. The workgroup will specifically look at strategies for hospital pandemic flu response and coordination with plans of regional partners, such as EMS.

## Infectious Disease Workgroup

**Lead- Jeff Duchin, MD, PH (206) 296-4814**

This workgroup is made up of Infectious Disease Specialists and representatives from the local Association of Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC).

- The Infectious Disease Workgroup held its first meeting on September 7, 2006. Representatives from seven Coalition hospitals attended the meeting. Dr. Duchin led the discussion and focused on pandemic flu planning and infection control issues. The group will continue to meet to discuss infection control, antiviral drug use, and other relevant topics.
- Workgroup members were encouraged to become more actively involved in pandemic Flu and other emergency preparedness planning in their respective organizations.

## Legal Work Group

**Staff contact – Amy Eiden, PH at 206-206-8969**

This group is comprised of attorneys representing healthcare organizations and government entities in King County

- The workgroup has reviewed a recommended model procedure for delivery of Health Officer Isolation Orders to hospitalized persons.
- The group is conducting an analysis of legal issues that could arise during a large scale emergency response. This work is being coordinated with a cross-jurisdictional legal workgroup that includes representation from state agencies and other counties.
- A review of the draft “Bench Book” was also completed recently by the workgroup. The bench book is for use by Superior Court Judges during a public health emergency. It is being developed by the King County Superior Court and the Prosecuting Attorney’s Office

## Medical Directors Committee

**Staff contact – Dr. Jeff Duchin, PH at 206-296-4814**

The Medical Directors will provide expertise and leadership for issues related to clinical care during any health emergency where large-scale emergency response and/or changes in routine healthcare delivery are necessary. The Medical Directors will review and develop clinical policies, protocols, practice standards, and plans that are relevant to emergency response.

- The Medical Directors have discussed potential medical resource distribution approaches, surge models and Pandemic Flu employee training.
- Dr. Kathryn Koelemay and Dr. Jeff Duchin have developed a series of PowerPoint presentations entitled:
  1. *Preparing for Pandemic Flu: What our Healthcare Workers Need to Know*
  2. *Healthcare Worker Ability & Willingness during Pandemic Flu,*
  3. *ICS for Clinicians: What we Need to Know and Why We Need to Know It.*
- The presentations can be utilized for training healthcare workers. They are available for review at the link below:

[www.metrokc.gov/health/hccoalition/presentations.htm](http://www.metrokc.gov/health/hccoalition/presentations.htm)

- \* A medical Director’s meeting will be scheduled after the New Year

## Regional Medical Resource Center (RMRC)

**Staff contact – Allison Schletzbaum, 206-731-6213**

The RMRC is the linchpin for coordinated operational preparedness and response. The Center will monitor and distribute human and medical resources among participating Healthcare Coalition organizations and facilities based on the objectives of the emergency response.

- \* The Software Selection work group is close to completing the Request for Proposal for the RMRC Software.
- \* The windstorm emergency response has provided valuable insight into RMRC planning issues and helped mobilize many communities who will be valuable to the RMRC planning process.
- \* Work continues on the Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP) project. A majority of the area hospitals have scheduled appointments to assess their service provider needs. Allison and her team have conducted 5 TSP site visits to date.

## King County Call Center Project

**Project Manager, Joe Cropley**

**Washington Poison Control, 206-517-2383**

This project will document the existing call center capacity of participating health-related and medical organizations and will develop strategies to increase capacity. The Project will address medical phone advice and triage, as well as other public information needs. The project will involve the participation of 911 and 211 systems, Group Health and Evergreen Hospital, the Red Cross, the Office of Emergency Management, Sound Telecom, and Public Health.

- \* Joe is currently engaging organizations with medical call centers to participate in a basic first test of the medical triage hotline concept for the February 1st pandemic flu exercise.
- \* Joe also continues to make site visits with Allison Schletzbaum regarding Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP) for area hospitals.
- \* Public Health Communication Manager, James Apa has met with Joe regarding potential models for phone surge and triage.

## Alternate Facilities Project

**Project Manager - Tony Cebollero, PH at 206-205-8621, Dr. Lewis Rubinson 206-205-5091**

Tony will work with partners to establish emergency facilities that can provide triage, ambulatory care, observation, and palliative care. These facilities will be designed to supplement the regular health care system in the event of emergencies that generate demand that exceeds existing surge capacity, i.e. "super surge."

- Tony has begun to review potential sites for alternate care facilities and medication/vaccine dispensing centers. A tour of the Connelly Center at Seattle University was conducted in late October. It may serve as a possible site for an Alternate Care Facility; however a follow up meeting will be scheduled.
- Dr. Lewis Rubinson has initiated the planning process for alternate facilities that will provide triage, urgent care and palliative care.
- \* PHSKC with support from our partners pulled together a special needs shelter due to the power outages at the end of December. The shelter was created to support potential nursing home evacuations and individuals who might require medical maintenance that did not have power. Many lessons were learned from this experience and will be applied to alternate facilities planning.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- ♣ Ambulatory Care Workgroup  
January 3, 2007 7:30-9:00am @ King County Medical Society
- ♣ Meeting with King County Insurers  
January 9, 2007 3:00-5:00 pm @ Harborview Medical Center
- ♣ Healthcare Coalition Coordinating Team Meeting  
January 10, 2007 1:30-3:00 pm @ Wells Fargo Center
- ♣ Hospital Strategy Group  
January 11, 2007 7:30-10:00am @ Northwest Hospital
- ♣ Basic and Advanced Disaster Life Support Courses  
January 23-26, 2007 @ Regional Criminal Justice Center
- ♣ Region 6 Emergency Preparedness Committee Meeting  
January 31, 2006 7:30-10:00am @ the KC ECC
- ♣ Healthcare Coalition Steering Committee  
February 5, 2007 10:00-12:00 @ Harborview Medical Center

## OTHER UPDATES:

- Free personal and family pandemic flu preparedness brochures: *Preparing for Pandemic Influenza: A Personal and Family Guide* is an excellent resource for educating employees about the potential impact of pandemic flu, and giving them the tools and the encouragement to prepare now. Free copies (including delivery) in English and Spanish are available through the Washington State Department of Health Web site at [www.doh.wa.gov/panflu/family\\_brochure.htm](http://www.doh.wa.gov/panflu/family_brochure.htm) (click on General Store Website link to order brochures).
- For a summary and highlights of the major Congressional reauthorization of the Public Health Preparedness Act of 2002 - now titled *Pandemic and All Hazards Preparedness Act*, go to: [www.upmc-biosecurity.org](http://www.upmc-biosecurity.org)



We would like to extend a thank you to all the people and organizations who so generously volunteered their time and efforts to support the development of the King County Healthcare Coalition. We look forward to working to get our community better prepared to respond to disasters in 2007.

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*Have a Safe and Happy Holiday Season!*

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